

## HAND-ON APPLICATION TRAINING (HAT) FOR KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS IN TAMILNADU – A GOOD ENGLISH PODIUM WITH ENJOYABLE LEARNING

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### ABSTRACT

*In India, especially in Tamil Nadu, the English coaching given to the students in Government School does not meet the level of proficiency in Private schools. When all the students meet in colleges, the level of proficiency proves to be nil for the Government school students. This starts even from the kindergarten level in government schools. The research work entitled ‘Hand-on Application Training (HAT) for Kindergarten students of Government Schools in Tamil Nadu – A Good English Podium with Enjoyable Learning focuses on the development of the school kids even in kindergarten level in government schools. The study throws light on how to equip the fragile minds even in the early stages without having much technically advanced teaching aids but with only the basically required and satisfying aids. The researcher has approached the four skills of language- LSRW and the development them among government school students. The methodologies and the basic teaching aids which could be used for the betterment of the students are highlighted and the best utilization of the same are discussed in this article. The researcher has identified these useful strategies to elevate the level of English of the rural students who study in Government schools in Tamil Nadu, India.*

**KEYWORDS:** CBSE, Matriculation Schools, Teaching aids, Proficiency, Accent

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### INTRODUCTION

The aim of education is to facilitate each student to attain all-round development according to his/her own attributes. To achieve this, students should be endowed with suitable assistance and guidance in accordance with their abilities and learning needs, so that they can widen their potential to the fullest.

Globalizing has made English as the most spoken language across the globe. The level of English competency escorts to employment. The world as a whole demands only the language competencies along with soft skills. Such acquisition of English language has a setback starting from the school life. There are ransom ways of training the students. But in Indian Education System Dictating, marking from books pertained to questions and by-hearting are the most serious issues. In so many schools when this structure is followed the students’ memory is tested whereas the intelligence is not tested at all. As Mr. Damodharan accurately remarks about Traditional Teaching Method, he states the following complaints.

- More Emphasis has been given on theory without any practical and real life time situations.
- Learning from memorization but not understanding
- Marks rather that result oriented.[4]

Under such stipulation the language acquisition remains a question mark at the kindergarten level, especially in government schools in Tamil Nadu, India. This paper endeavors to throw a critical spectrum of teaching aids for Government school kids in Kindergarten, who really miss the golden opportunity of learning English as a foreign language.

The school kids are good receptors of language at the early stage. The Child Acquisition Learning is the best strategy adopted to understand the child's language acquiring skill. But this is meant for vernacular language which does not support the foreign language development. It is universal that training foreign language needs learned parents and surroundings. Grantz states that, 'The education that children receive is very much dependent on the education their parents received when they were children. Research shows that the literacy of the parents, strongly affects the education of their children' (3). In that accord in India, it is far difficult for the child to learn second language at home. As a consequence, the school environment for 3-4 years old kids is the exact location for second language learning. This school environment varies for CBSE, Matriculation and Government School students. The first and foremost reason for differentiation is the unforced environment to speak in English in Government Schools.

### **Difference Between Various Schools**

Children are to be exposed to English environment at the kindergarten level. A child in CBSE school speaks English fluently even in his two to three months of schooling in Kindergarten whereas a student in Government schools suffers to speak English even when he completes secondary and higher secondary education. Because of this CBSE students are able to compete in this modern world and they get good jobs in the future. This wide gap has to be bridged between the government schools and the privatized schools. Though the practice of SamacheerKalvi (A common syllabus for all the schools in Tamil Nadu) is being formulated with a lateral thinking that there must not be any difference between the government and private school students, the forum for teaching eventually is a question. In CBSE and Matriculation schools the mode of communication between the students and teachers is English and sometimes Tamil, the vernacular language. In Government schools, the mode of communication is only in Tamil. Hence the English speaking environment is not created among the students in Government Schools. They are dumb folded when meeting a CBSE or matriculation school student. This paper brings a spectrum of opportunity for the Government school kindergarten students in Tamil Nadu for their enhanced English language acquisition even before 5-6 years like CBSE or Matriculation school kids. As Kindergarten students are good receptors of new language at this age, the focus on English must be made mandatory by creating an English Enriched Forum. The students are to be given Hands-on Application Training called HAT for their development.

While developing the language fluency of the students, the focus has to be naturally on all the four skills of language. The first step in letting the kids to explore is writing the alphabets. They learn alphabets and some key words in Kindergarten. Even this practice varies from Government Schools to Matriculation Board Schools and Central Board Schools. The CBSE and Matriculation Board Students are imposed to a language forum with smart classroom systems along with visual aid techniques. The training given in government schools lacks these concentration retaining tools. The most important reason is the strength of the class. In a Central Board School there are only 20-25 students in a classroom. In the Matriculation Board it raises up to 30-40 where as in Government Schools it further raises up to 50-60. This increase in the strength does not irrigate the quality teaching. Instead it douses off the power of the teacher. Their desire to supplement input to the students automatically gets devastated. The exposure to Language Lab even in the kindergarten level in CBSE and Matriculation is totally out of reach to children in Government Schools. This gap has to be

bridged for the betterment and equivalence of the students.

The students of Government schools acquire minimum attention and care because of massive population. This problem has to be addressed in a favourable way so that the n-number of students with potential teachers in Government Schools will be benefitted. This paper attempts to throw light on how the problems encountered by the massive population in Government Schools in acquiring English language, could be solved with simple techniques and practices. The four skills of the students are to be fine-tuned even from their kindergarten level.

### **Purpose of Research**

The purpose of this research is to analyse the effect of teaching the kindergarten students in government schools in Tamil Nadu, India, using basic elements in order to enhance their English competency upto the standard of CBSE and Matriculation schools. The specific questions of the study are:

- What is the success rate of using traditional materials to enhance the proficiency of kindergarten students?
- How does the incorporation of classroom teaching aids benefit the students?
- To identify whether the level of English proficiency among the Government School Students is developed after using HAT method?

### **METHODS AND METHODOLOGIES**

This research is in an application model. Primary school students have targeted in this research. The kindergarten kids are used for testing process. In that group two methods have directly implemented they are Bi-lingual and Direct method. Though, the methods are common one ESL classroom environment, the testing group or control group belongs to the primary students. The lesson is well explained to them in the traditional teaching methods, in this method where the teachers are to be more active than the students. Though these methods are applied along with various teaching aids, the teacher's contribution is highly expected in this forum to enhance the credibility of language acquisition among kindergarten students. They are trained in all the four skills for acquiring proficiency.

### **Reading**

The first skill to be enhanced among the kindergarten kids is Reading. The visual aid given to the students in reading a letter is very important. Though the students of CBSE and Matriculation schools have the provision of using LCD projectors and smart boards, big charts serve for Government School Students. Starting from the letters, the students are to be shown letters along with pictures pertained to the letters. Then the critical reading has to be induced by showing multiple charts at a time and by asking the students to select the right word from the options which the teacher asks for. The students in the kindergarten must be thorough with the alphabets and two and three letter words. In Tamil Nadu, 'Students were hesitant to converse in English due to poor vocabulary', (69) says Usha Dutta in her synthesis report. This is because the Government School kids are not given exposure and reading practice. Showing words with pictures in charts will help the students to grasp very easily in reading part even in the Kindergarten level. Further worksheets are to be given. The students must not be forced to write home works. They have to be given activities like preparing collage, pasting pictures for words, writing words with pictures and pronouncing the words with clarity. This HAT will enhance their reading proficiency. Further reading aloud practice has to be given. When they read the words which are familiar to them, when are drilled in that function through HAT method, the reading proficiency of the students will be improved.

### Writing

For writing the students must be given the written practice of five letters per day. Then a test has to be conducted to analyze the writing proficiency of letters. Drawing stars and ice-creams on their notebooks motivates them to write better with good and clear cursive letter writing. Then two or three letter words are to be given per day as home work. In Tamil nadu, Now-a-days students write a lot in home as homework. But this is highly condemnable as it disturbs them and they just write merely by copying. Instead minimum homework to write helps them to feel better. The students are to be exposed to visual interpretation so that the letters will get into their mind. Instead of giving homework in writing practice giving picture worksheets as homework will enable them to work well. Instead they need to be given activity based worksheets like – joining the dots of letters, filling the missing letters in a word and drawing a picture pertained to the word. It will kindle their thinking ability and will induce the interest among the students. The students will start to imitate the worksheets even as playing games. This does not cost much. It gives a good exposure for them in the writing. The teacher has to be highly careful enough to let the students to write cursive letters for two or three letter words. This will help them to write neatly and legibly. Further writing will get improved simultaneously.

### Listening

In CBSE and Matriculation schools LCD projectors with speakers are available in the language lab for the students. As this is costlier, in government schools the usage of Audio –Visual halls (A-V halls) are difficult to be established. Instead of A-V hall, the class room must have a pair of speakers which may cost a minimum amount of ₹ 300/- to ₹ 500/-. Even the mobile phones or iPods are enough for learning now-a-days. The teachers have to store some good English rhymes with music and some vocabularies with accent and that are to be played through the speaker. This way provides a platform for the students to listen to foreign accent. After playing for some time, the students should be listening to short anecdotes with the same vocabularies in which they are drilled so far. When it is done, the listening skills as well as the words with accent will be accommodated within the students. This method needs the phone or iPod along with the speakers alone. The technology will be of reach to the teachers and students if they are used even in kindergarten levels. The receptive skills at this age will be higher and the students when introduced to native accent will be highly benefitted. The teachers have to carry out some homework exercises to train the words in the anecdotes before teaching the same. They will recite the rhymes in the same accent as it is. This will provide a platform to the students to listen to the native accent and to reproduce the same. The language acquires a good impact. This demands a trained teacher in that arena. Further the teacher has to talk flawless English inside the classroom so that the students will listen to it continuously. This practice is a cost-effective practice which could be used in Government schools of Tamil Nadu to enhance their listening skills in the kindergarten level.

### Speaking

The kindergarten students are to be taught small moral stories with a rhyme scheme. Even the short story has to be narrated and sung through the speakers very slowly. Then they must be offered a podium, to talk about the story line or what they have listened and learned so far, in front of the class. It could be done in their native language at first to gain confidence and to avoid stage fear. Later when the second turn is given it has to be done in English. Some may hesitate at first. Giving a small motivation to the performed students will initiate the necessary participation from everyone. This will stimulate the students to proceed further even with or without errors. Further, at this age they do not have fear to occupy the dias of the class. This gradually develops their personality. The students must be taught with the basic

conversations like, introducing one self, asking about health, thanking, admiring, asking for permission, replying to questions, etc., with minimum of two to three exchanges with- 4-6 words per exchange. The sample conversations are as follows:

- **A:** Hai! How are you?
- **B:** Fine. Thank you.

The basic grammar is not mandatory here. The coherent usage of words and sentences with repeated practice are very important here.

Further for speaking, HAT methodology has to be applied. The students are to be taken outside the classroom – to the auditorium, beneath the trees, to the fish tank and to the library to let them wander and ask questions on their observation but in English. They are to be motivated to speak in English with the words they have learnt so far. The teacher has to help them in this regard. When they are used to this practice they will feel comfortable to speak in public places with enough knowledge. They will have the confidence to speak in English and to respond to the questions of CBSE and other school students in English.

In addition, the students must be given a force to be in the English speaking environment. When forced English speaking environment is given by the faculty in the class, the students will get into ‘Think in English’ concept with the basic sentences which will elevate them to greater heights in the future. As Benny Lewis points out, ‘Thinking in English is an important goal that brings you one step closer to becoming fluent’ [1]. This ‘Think in English’ concept needs to be implemented with the help of Teachers in Government School for their school children. The teachers must be highly quipped in the language by undergoing various grammatical workshops, fluency workshops and phonetic accent training workshops. The young teachers are highly interested in utilizing the technology than the older ones. They read the minds of the kids too. It would be highly beneficial if the young teachers, who are the ardent supporters of the children, pet and pamper them for their activities. DeepaNagamani and et al. states in their article that, ‘young teachers (age group 22-30 years) use computer and internet more often than the teachers of other age groups’ (72). So they could support the kids with various teaching strategies learnt through internet. When it is implemented with promptness among the students by all the teachers who go to the classes, the students will be highly benefitted. If this is done in the basic steps of the child in kindergarten level, then the child will reach up to the level of CBSE or State Board Students in the consecutive years.

In general, according to observation detected there are high favour of the experiment group come up with more involvement is determined. Purpose of the paper is to enhance the language skills form kinder Garten students as motivational factor on L2.

Further for development of Speaking, the students have to be given badge with words like ‘HONOUR’ or ‘GOOD’ or ‘EXCELLENT’ for speaking in English throughout. At the kindergarten level, if this method is followed, the students will be happy enough to receive the badges, further they will try to acquire the badges every month. This kindles their spirit to speak in English. The fear of speaking foreign language, the fear of ridicule and the shyness will be shot out when these practices are followed even in the kindergarten level. The students must be getting practice to speak in English even in Kindergarten level to make them proficient in their higher classes. As given in *Teaching of English* book, ‘build familiarity with the language (through primarily spoken or spoken- and written input) in meaningful situations, so that the

child builds up a working knowledge of the language' (6). When they can understand and speak English fluently, they will find easy to understand the subjects which are taught in English. Through this the gap between the high-fee private schools will be equalized by the low-fee government schools. As Thompson points out,

Young Children adapt quickly to routines. Set time each day for singing, listening and moving and dancing to music; learning new rhymes; listening to stories, etc., help to engage the young learners in regular language learning activities. In this way the young learners can quickly begin to build a repertoire of songs, stories and other familiar texts. (53)

## FINDINGS

Based on the gained finding from this research the following recommendations are proposed: The science of teaching to the primary students has to be in L2. The most suitable methods always have to be implemented irrespective of gender and students' family background and teachers' attitudes must focus on teaching in L2 or Second Language. As it is a primary standard, enough motivation and ample number of teaching aids have to be used to encourage the KG students. Teachers-oriented in-service trainings and courses shall be developed for handling students in kindergarten levels.

## CONCLUSIONS

This research paper scrutinizes the speckle in Government school teaching arena in Tamilnadu and the ways to rectify the same. The students in the government schools who are unaffordable to the cost of private schools are not to be given secluded education. Their IQ level will be induced in this forum of language learning. Simple methods, even in the kindergarten level with young teachers in government school, will enable the students to communicate in English properly which is the most concrete expected skill of the world now-a-days. Proficient teachers with minimum equipments can bring the kindergarten students of the Government schools in Tamilnadu to greater heights equivalent to CBSE and matriculation schools.

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